

### REMARKS

This Amendment responds to the Office Action dated August 17, 2004 in which the Examiner stated that the application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters.

As indicated above, withdrawn claims 3 and 6-14 have been cancelled without prejudice and claims 1, 2, 5 and 15-18 have been amended to correct minor informalities. The amendments are unrelated to a statutory requirement for patentability and do not narrow the literal scope of the claims.

Thus it now appears that the application is in condition for reconsideration and allowance. Reconsideration and allowance at an early date are respectfully requested.

If for any reason the Examiner feels that the application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact, by telephone, the Applicants' undersigned attorney at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed within the currently set shortened statutory period, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such extension of time may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 02-4800.

In the event that any additional fees are due with this paper, please charge  
our Deposit Account No. 02-4800.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: October 14, 2004

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